Pollution in Ganga and Yamuna

1881. SHRI PRAFULL GORADIA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware the major rivers like Ganga and Yamuna have been so much polluted that even fish do not survive in them;

(b) whether the scheme of cleaning the major rivers has been given up; and

(c) if not, what measures are being taken to see that untreated factories and domestic waste is not discharged in the rivers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) Dissolved oxygen levels in a river are important in assessing the river water quality and the survival of fish in it. The Ganga Action Plan Phase-I started in 1985 is nearing completion. The water quality of the Ganga has shown an improvement in terms of the dissolved oxygen level owing to the implementation of this plan. The summer average values for dissolved oxygen levels are more than the required standard of 5 mg. per litre at the monitoring stations along the stretch of the Ganga. The Yamuna Action Plan, a component of Ganga Action Plan Phase-II is also under implementation in 20 towns of UP and Haryana besides Delhi. This plan will be completed in 14 towns of U.P. and Haryana and in Delhi by 1999-2000. The quality of water in the river Yamuna will improve considerably when the works under the Yamuna Action Plan are completed and a minimum flow of fresh water is allowed in the river to dilute the effect of the discharge of treated sewage into it. No instances of fish dying in the water of the Ganga and the Yamuna have been reported after the above river action plans commenced.

(b) No, Sir. A National River Conservation Plan which includes the Ganga Action Plan Phase-II is udner implementation to improve the water quality in 22 major rivers in 14 states covering pollution abatement works in 141 towns.

(c) Under the Ganga Action Plan Phase-I, out of 35 sewage treatment plants sanctioned, 29 plants with a capacity to treat 728 million litres per day of sewage have been completed. The remaining six sewage treatment plants with a treatment capacity of 145 million litres per day are in advanced stages of completion. In addition, sewage treatment plants are being constructed under the National River Conservation Plan to intercept and treat about 3675 million litres of municipal sewage per day. The Central Pollution Control Board issued directions in August 1997 under Section 18(1)(b) of the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 to all the State Pollution Control Boards and Pollution Control Committees to take action against the defaulting industries. As a result, the number of the defaulting industries has gone down from 847 to 521. Legal action has been initiated by the respective State Pollution Control Boards/Pollution Control Committees against the defaulting units. The Central Pollution Control Board has also issued directions to the State Pollution Control Boards/Pollution Control Committees to ensure proper operation and maintenance of sewage treatment plants constructed under the National River Action Plan of the Government.

Sludge blanket plant for Ganga Action Plan

1882. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE:
SHRI NILOTPAL BASU:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the report "Foul flows the Ganga", appearing in Outlook magazine dated 28th December, 1998;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto;

(c) whether Sludge Blanket Plant, developed by a Dutch Company for Ganga Action Plan, is yet to be used in any other country;

(d) if so, the reason for using an unproven technology on such a large scale; and

(e) if not, the details of use of such a system in other places?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) and (b) The article titled "Foul flows the Ganga" in Outlook magazine dated 28.12.98 has been communicated to UP Government and the concerned State officials incharge of Ganga Action Plan works in Varanasi for examination and necessary corrective measures. Also, the Government has recently constituted a committee of expert NGOs to suggest steps to be taken to make the programme more successful.

(c) to (e) The UASB (Upflow Anacrobic Sludge Blanket) process developed by Dutch universities has been adopted in Ganga Action Plan under the Dutch bilateral assistance programme after extensive pilot plant studies in India and evaluation by experts of the performance of this technology in India and other countries. This technology requires less area of land and equipment and facilitates biogas power generation instead of power consumption as compared to other conventional mechanized sewage treatment technologies. The UASB technology is currently in use in Columbia, Brazil, Mexico, Portugal and Indonesia.

Decline in the Bamboo Forests

1883. SHRI YERRA NARAYANA SWAMY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that forests and stock of bamboo in the country is going down alarmingly;

(b) whether Government have conducted any survey on the socio-economic aspects of bamboo usage in the country by the poorer sections;

(c) whether it is afact that bamboo resources, particularly in the Eastern Ghats in Andhra Pradesh, have depleted over the last 10 years;

(d) whether any financial incentives would be offered to States like Andhra Pradesh to revive their bamboo forests; and

(e) if so, the steps proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) The Forest Survey of India, Dehradun assesses the forest cover of the country biennially and as per the State of Forest Report, 1997, the forest cover including Bamboo forest of the country has decreased by 5,482 sq. km as compared to the 1995 assessment.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) No study report has been received by this Ministry about the depletion of bamboo resources in Eastern Ghats in Andhra Pradesh. However, as per the State of Forest Report, 1997, forest cover of 3822 sq. km has been reduced in Andhra Pradesh in the period from 1989 to 1993.

(d) and (e) Bamboo plantations are raised under on-going Centrally Sponsored Schemes and externally aided projects.

केन्द्रीय प्रदूषण नियंत्रण बोर्ड में रिक्त पद

1884. **श्री रामगोपाल यादव:**
श्री ईशदत्त यादव:

क्या पर्यावरण और वन मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या केन्द्रीय प्रदूषण नियंत्रण बोर्ड में अधिकारियों और कर्मचारियों के अनेक पद रिक्त हैं;